

their lives yesterday exemplify the courage that happens every day in diplomatic posts around the globe. They learn the language, and they live with the people wherever they go.

As I have indicated, I have traveled to many of the American Embassies abroad. I have always been so impressed and grateful for their leadership, and I communicate that to them every chance I get. We are so fortunate to have had Hillary Clinton leading the State Department for the last 3½ years.

I have indicated that Ambassador Stevens was not a political appointment; he was a Foreign Service officer. As I indicated, he served in the Peace Corps and spent his life giving his time and his talents to drum up democracy and American values around the world.

I support President Obama's directive to increase securing our diplomatic posts around the world and provide whatever resources are necessary to keep our personnel in Libya safe. I will continue to monitor the situation as we learn more about these terrible events.

#### JAMES BILLINGTON'S 25 YEARS OF SERVICE

Mr. REID. Madam President, Henry Ward Beecher, the famous abolitionist, once said, "A library is not a luxury, but one of the necessities of life." I agree. Our Founding Fathers also agreed, and that is why we have the Library of Congress. The Library of Congress was initially the library of Thomas Jefferson. That is what started the Library of Congress. It was established in 1800. It was this country's first Federal cultural institution. It is the largest library in the world. There are 35 million books and 838 miles of bookshelves. The numbers are staggering. Almost 10,000 new items are added every day.

For 25 years the Librarian of Congress has been Dr. James Billington. He has been a faithful and effective leader. I first got to know Dr. Billington in 1986 when I came to the Senate. There was a little squabble between a couple of the more senior Senators, which was a wonderful opportunity for me because one of the very senior Senators thought that maybe he deserved more than being the chair of the Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch. I grabbed that. I was happy to do that. I loved that experience. I learned a lot about what goes on here and how we pay for things. At that time it was an effort to really hurt the Library of Congress, so I had that opportunity to stand for the Library of Congress. Every time we had a vote, we won and they were not able to damage the Library of Congress.

I got to know Dr. Billington. I had the good fortune to travel once with him to Russia. Dr. Billington, before coming to the Library of Congress, was one of the foremost scholars on the former Soviet Union. He knew every-

thing about that land. He still writes about the new Russia. He is a very stalwart academic. When he took over the Library of Congress in 1987, computers were a scarcity, but he had a vision of what the future should be, and he thought it would be important to digitize the Library's collections and make them available on the Internet. There was a little pushback at first, but, of course, now that is history. That is what happened.

I have such admiration for him as a person. He is a good person not only from an academic standing but as an administrator. I am glad they were unable to slash the Library's budget as they tried, and as a result, people came to a better understanding of what the Library of Congress was all about. I am glad I was able to play a part in that. He has always ensured that the Library of Congress would remain an unmatched resource for knowledge and enlightenment. So it is with pleasure that I congratulate my friend Dr. Billington on 25 years—a quarter of a century—of dedicated service at the Library of Congress.

#### THE ECONOMY

Mr. REID. Very quickly, Madam President, I was very disappointed to hear Speaker BOEHNER say yesterday that he was giving up on reaching a bipartisan agreement to avoid huge cuts to both domestic and defense programs. I don't feel that way. I can assure everyone within the sound of my voice that I have not given up on finding a reasonable and balanced approach to reducing our debt and avoiding these difficult cuts. Democrats agree that across-the-board cuts are not the best way to solve the problems. Sequestration is a bitter pill, but we did that on purpose. That was no accident. That is why there was overwhelming support for the budget deficit reduction act to have sequestration. The sequestration was engineered to be hard to take, so it forced us to compromise. It was designed to be tough enough to force the two sides to reach a balanced deal. That is why there was widespread bipartisan support for this.

I hope Speaker BOEHNER will reconsider. I believe it is much too early to give up. I urge my Republican colleagues not to give up on themselves because I am not going to give up on them. It is time for them to stop rooting for the economy to fail and root for Congress to succeed and reach common ground. Remember, the markets are watching our every move, with Moody's saying yesterday that they were thinking of downgrading our debt standing credit rating. This is not the right time to say there is no hope in getting things done. I disagree. I say that the glass is half full, not half empty.

The Speaker's statement came an hour after that reminder from Moody's came forward. We are willing to work. I say that to my friend JOHN BOEHNER

and to everyone else. We are willing to negotiate, we are willing to cooperate, we are willing to consider the difficult cuts to programs we hold dear, and I think the Republicans should do the same. So far they have refused. Due to the orders of their leader Grover Norquist, they have refused to raise even a penny of new revenue. They have refused to ask millionaires to contribute their fair share to help reduce the debt and the deficit. And Democrats won't agree to a one-sided solution that lets the superwealthy off the hook while forcing the middle class and those in greatest need to bear all the hardship. I repeat, we are willing to consider difficult cuts to programs we believe are extremely important.

The sequestration is not a perfect legislative tool, but rarely do we do anything legislatively that is perfect. That is the way it has been for generations. But at least it has the benefit of being a balanced approach, and it has the power of law.

Republicans, including Vice Presidential candidate PAUL RYAN, would do well to remember that they voted for the sequestration.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

#### HONORING OUR FOREIGN SERVANTS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, we learned yesterday, and are receiving reports this morning, of the attacks against the U.S. Embassy in Cairo and the U.S. Consulate in Benghazi, Libya. In Benghazi, our Ambassador Chris Stevens and three other Americans were killed in the service of our Nation. Our thoughts and sympathies today are with the families of these brave Americans.

These attacks remind us of the sacrifices made on a daily basis by foreign service officers, diplomatic security personnel, and our marine security guards. I join my colleagues in strongly condemning the murder of these innocent Americans, and I support employing every available tool at our disposal to ensure the safety of Americans overseas and to hunt down those responsible for these attacks.

Yesterday we commemorated the anniversary of the attacks of September 11, and today we are reminded that brave Americans serve us every day at the risk of their own lives. We honor the Americans we lost in Libya and we will stand united in our response.

Among the things we can agree on in Washington is that the attacks on the United States and its representatives will be met with resolve and that America's presence and defense of our national interests across the globe will not be deterred by the acts of violent extremists.

I yield the floor.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

#### VETERANS JOBS CORPS ACT OF 2012—MOTION TO PROCEED

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 3457, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 476, S. 3457, a bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a veterans job corps, and for other purposes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the next 70 minutes will be evenly divided and controlled between the two leaders, with Republicans controlling the first half.

The Senator from Tennessee.

#### MAKING TOUGH CHOICES

Mr. CORKER. Madam President, this is a great Nation.

I was interested to hear the comments of our two leaders today, and I am saddened, as are all of us here, regarding the news of Ambassador Stevens and three other hard-working public servants who represent us. We are a great Nation. This is a great Nation. People such as those individuals demonstrate the exceptionalism of Americans all around the world.

That is why it saddens me to come to the floor today, on the eve of hearing about whether the Federal Reserve, which will decide tomorrow, is going to print more money. Our markets are volatile each day, trying to figure out and read the minds of what our central bankers are going to do. Two days ago I spoke with one of our leading administration officials—someone whom I respect greatly—who had just attended a meeting in the Asian area where Christine Legarde was speaking to a small group of folks. She is the head of the International Monetary Fund. She stated that the real difference in how the world is going to evolve over the next short term and how the economies of the world are going to react is based upon whether people in Europe and people in the United States of America are going to rise up and deal with the problems they have internally.

I look at what is happening on both sides of the Atlantic, with central bankers printing money to buy debt of great nations—nations that have evolved, that are sophisticated, that are democracies. They pave the way for other cultures to evolve and develop economically themselves. Yet we wake up in a world where because politicians in Europe and politicians here in the United States of America have not risen to deal with the fiscal issues

within their own countries, the central bankers are left in a situation where they are printing money and buying debt in order to move a crisis further away from the day we now live in.

I know the majority leader talked about negotiations that are taking place regarding sequester and I know everybody in this body has been involved in some meeting of some kind to deal with the fiscal issues our Nation faces. I realize that over the next 60 days there is likely nothing that we as a body are going to do. I understand that. I don't think anyone in America expects that is going to happen over the next week and a half. We will figure out a way to move out of here and hopefully not do any damage to our country.

What I hope will happen is when we come back after the election, during a lameduck session or shortly thereafter, all of us will get serious about dealing with our Nation's fiscal issues. The majority leader spoke to the economy. I want our economy to do well. I want citizens in Tennessee and New York and all across our country to do well. Yet what we have done over the course of the last year and a half or so is passed silly little bills that have nothing whatsoever to do with sustaining a long-term economy, and we find ourselves again waking up on the eve of finding out whether the Chairman of our Federal Reserve is going to print more money to buy our debt to make it less painful for us and cause us to be in a position where we put off making the tough decisions. I hope the Federal Reserve Chairman tomorrow is going to show the humility he needs to show, that monetary policy has its limits, and it is up to us now to do our job.

So I am saddened today about the news of some wonderful public servants having lost their lives. I wake up every day with a tremendous sense of privilege to serve in this body and to represent people such as those who died, who are living in tough circumstances around the world, to make sure that all of us here are safe. I hope what will happen in this body is that Republicans and Democrats alike will honor the sacrifices, as we honored them yesterday and we today solemnly think about, that people make around this world on our behalf to keep us free and safe, and that we as a body, Republicans and Democrats, are going to rise and do the things we need to do to put in place a real fiscal reform package that will not rely upon the sugar of the Federal Reserve, but that we will do the things we need to do to create a sustained economy.

I believe—and I think most people in this body know it when they think about it—we are one fiscal reform package away from being able to focus on being a great Nation—we are a great Nation—but to be able to focus on that. When we look at where we are as a country, with the tremendous energy resources that 2 years ago we didn't even realize we had in this continent;

when we look at the technology breakthroughs that are happening in this great country; when we look at the pharmaceutical breakthroughs that are happening and saving lives around the world, we are one reform package away from putting this problem in our rear-view mirror and focusing on the greatness of this Nation.

So, again, I know we are not going to do anything over the next week and a half and we are not going to do anything over the next 60 days. But I hope Senators from all around this country and House Members from all around this country will come back after this election and have the courage that has been demonstrated so often by so many Americans to make the tough choices that are necessary to put our fiscal woes behind us, to cause this economy to grow, to allow the standard of living of Americans to rise and, candidly, to help lift hundreds of millions of people around this world out of poverty. That is what people are depending on. It is an embarrassment to find ourselves in this position where we are being diminished around the world, because people are looking at us—the great example to the world of free enterprise and limited government and democracy—and knowing that we don't have that courage today.

So I am hopeful we are going to come back and deal with these issues, we are going to do it in a bipartisan way, and then as a Nation we can continue to focus on our greatness and we can help not only uplift our own citizens through economic growth but help continue to be a beacon to the world.

I yield the floor and note the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### HONORING OUR FOREIGN SERVANTS

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam President, I have been coming to the Senate floor on a daily basis to talk about the importance of the wind production tax credit, and I intend to do so today. But before I bring up that important topic I want to speak to a situation, an incident, that is on everybody's mind; that is, what happened in Libya earlier today.

I think all of us in the Senate adhere, or should adhere, to the concept that politics should cease at the water's edge. I hope in this terrible tragedy that philosophy will hold fast. I, along with all Coloradans, absolutely condemn the murders—and that is what they were—of Ambassador Stevens and other U.S. State Department personnel today in Libya.

I am a member of the Senate Committees on Armed Services and Intelligence, and I know the men and